

SILENE CONOIDEA (CARYOPHYLLACEAE) NEW TO TEXAS

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Silene conoidea L., Conoid Catchfly or Cone Catchfly, is an annual or biennial native to Europe. It can be weedy in temperate regions and has been recorded in the U.S. from California, Colorado, Delaware, Idaho, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington (USDA, NRCS 2004). The species was not listed for Texas by Correll and Johnston (1970) or by Jones et al. (1997). This is the first report of its occurrence in the state.

In March of 2003, two plants were found growing in a vegetable garden at Peaceable Kingdom Farm near Washington, in Washington County. *Vaccaria hispanica* (P. Mill.) Rauschert, uncommon in the area, was collected nearby. The garden owners suspect the seeds of both may have been introduced in a load of turkey manure.

Voucher specimen: U.S.A. **TEXAS. Washington Co.:** Peaceable Kingdom Farm, Washington, Mt. Falls School Road, vegetable garden, 27 Mar 2003, Loring, Winston-Mize, and Mize 03-62 (TAMU). Images of the Washington County plants may be seen at http://www.csdl.tamu.edu/FLORA/cgi/gallery_query?q=silene+conoidea.

Silene conoidea somewhat resembles *S. antirrhina* L. (native to North America) and *S. gallica* L. (introduced), but it is larger in all respects. The leaves are lanceolate to oblanceolate, to 1 cm or more wide. The flowers are pink to purplish or white, with the petal blades 8–12 mm long and entire to toothed or notched. The most distinctive feature is the synsepalous calyx, which is 18–30 mm long and strongly inflated-conic at maturity, with about 20–30 strong ribs (Gleason & Cronquist 1991; Hickman 1993).

Silene conica L., another European species, is very similar but has petal blades only 3–6 mm long and a mature calyx only 12–17 mm long (Gleason & Cronquist 1991). It has been collected in the U.S. from Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, and Washington (USDA, NRCS 2004). It may eventually be found in Texas.

Though the owners of Peaceable Kingdom do not plan to let *S. conoidea* recur on their property, this is a species known to be weedy and it should be watched for.

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